

NEWS RELEASE

*OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS*

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For Immediate Release

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Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on May 9, 2005, **PONCEVENUS L. STOKES**, a/k/a “Boogie,” age 33, of Carbondale, Illinois, was sentenced in United States District Court in Benton. STOKES, who had previously pled guilty to conspiracy to distribute marihuana and unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon, was sentenced to 70 months’ imprisonment, 4 years’ supervised release, and was fined \$575.

The investigation determined that between at least July 2002, and July 26, 2004, STOKES and others were distributing marihuana in Jackson County. On July 20, 2004, and July 26, 2004, STOKES sold marihuana to a confidential source working for law enforcement. On July 26, 2004, when agents of the Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Task Force executed a search warrant at STOKES’s Carbondale residence, they located: United States currency, including pre-recorded buy money, marihuana, and a loaded firearm.

Information for the indictment was obtained through the cooperative effort of the Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff’s Office, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, pursuant to those agencies’ participation in the Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative in the Southern District of Illinois. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses. The Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is a joint and cooperative effort of the United States Attorney’s Office, Jackson County States Attorney’s Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff’s Office, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, and Murphysboro Police Department.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.